

Enrichment Activity

The Grand Canyon

Directions: Read the article below about the Grand Canyon. Then, on a separate sheet of paper, answer the questions that follow.

"Leave it as it is. ... The ages have been at work on it, and man [people] can only mar [harm] it. ... Keep it for your children, your children's children, and all who come after you, as the one great sight which every American should see."

– **President Theodore Roosevelt, 1903**

President Roosevelt spoke these words when he visited the Grand Canyon in Arizona in 1903. Americans agreed with him. In 1919 the Grand Canyon became a national park.

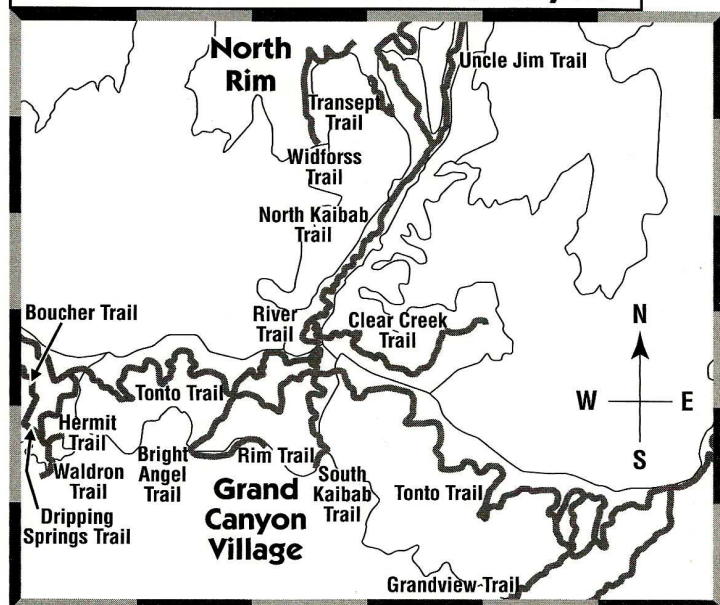
The Grand Canyon is one of the world's greatest wonders. The Paiute Native Americans who lived there called it "kaibab," or "mountain lying down." The Grand Canyon began to form more than 5 million years ago, as the Colorado River cut through solid rock layers. This giant canyon is 277 miles (446 km) long and averages 10 miles (16 km) wide.

The canyon often is more than one mile (1.6 km) deep. Adding to the canyon's great beauty are the red, green, and gold of the sun's reflected colors off its rock walls. Each year almost 4 million people from all over the world visit Grand Canyon National Park. Many visitors hike into or around parts of the canyon.

Hiking into the canyon is challenging. The trails are steep. One of the most

popular routes, the South Kaibab Trail, descends 4,620 feet (1,408 meters) over its six-mile course. Hikers generally spend at least one night in the canyon before hiking back out. They must carry all the water, food, and shelter they need for their trip. Hikers making the return trip on the Bright Angel Trail will climb 4,420 feet (1,347 m) in just under eight miles.

Selected Trails of the Grand Canyon



Taking Another Look

1. Suppose that you are a tourist hiking into the Grand Canyon. Write at least two paragraphs describing the trip into and out of the canyon.
2. **Mapping Activity** If you hike into the canyon on the South Kaibab Trail, what trail will you cross before you arrive at the Bright Angel Trail?
3. **Drawing Conclusions** Why do you think so many people from around the world visit the Grand Canyon?